



Hickory Flat Church

Letter From Leadership

4056 E. Cherokee Drive
Canton, GA 30115
770.345.5969

Leadership Council Minutes 8-18-09

In Attendance:

Kendall Sherrill-*Chair*

Ben Harper

Paula Benton

Barbara June

Melanie Williams

Cheryl Mills

Patricia Collier

Craig Sherer

Wayne Painter

Brian Hays

Kelly Neely

Jay Barr

Ken Williams

Rev. Robert Brown

Rev. René Watson

Paula Benton opened the meeting with Prayer.

Jack Morgan gave a report from the North Georgia Annual Conference Session held in Athens in June. We have a new Bishop, Michael Watson. The Conference Finance and Administration committee reported that the pension fund for pastors had lost 17% of its value. Facts that are good to know: the North Georgia Conference (ours) is the largest conference. We have 920 churches in the North Georgia Conference—and the great news: Hickory Flat was the TOP GIVER to the Housing and Homeless Council this year and we are in the top 5 churches in missions support. There is a pension initiative underway to give to the Central Conference Pension to help provide pensions for pastors whose pension is almost non-existent. A gift from the General conference of \$500,000 has been given and the clergy (ours included) were asked to give a matching gift and have done so. Our church will hold a special offering in November of this year to make a contribution to the fund.

Pastor Robert Brown presented a new leadership structure that was reviewed by the Preschool Board on July 25 and the Executive Team on August 10. The new structure is more in line with the suggestions of our Book of Discipline and brings more laity to the leadership table by broadening the ministries represented on the Leadership Council. The new structure would be in place by January when new leaders begin their terms following nomination by the Spiritual Gifts Team and election at Charge Conference which will be held on Sunday, November 22, 2009, at 7:00 pm. A copy of the finalized structure is attached. The vote: Unanimous.

Elizabeth Johnson and Kirsten McFadden made a presentation on MOPS Ministry (Mothers of Preschoolers). After meeting with Rev. Rene Watson, they came to the Council to seek permission and support to begin this ministry at Hickory Flat Church. The purpose of MOPS is to provide a safe place for women to gather to share fellowship, support, and learn about Christ. They seek to mobilize moms to make a better world. The groups provide an avenue to get people involved in church that may not otherwise attend. The group requested meeting space and nursery support on Tuesdays from 9:30-11:30 am twice per month. The vote: Unanimous.

Rev. Rene Watson made a presentation to launch a **Community Care Ministry**. The Mission: to provide care, encouragement, and support to persons who are hurting and in need. Our goal will be to provide resources that will empower people to move forward toward a healthy, balanced life in Christ through caring ministries and local outreach ministries. This ministry seeks to serve the community within our church and the community within a 5-10 mile radius beyond our doors. The complete presentation is attached. The ministry will be initially funded by monies that have been set aside for several years as part of the Journey of Faith Building Campaign. The funds were set aside for this purpose and we are now seeking to staff the ministry with the expectation of seeking outside funding (grants, private support) to continue to operate the ministry. The current fund balance of \$67,000 should provide for staffing and ministry startup for one to one and a half years. The Vote: Unanimous.

Rev. Robert Brown presented a proposal to add a reciprocal clause to our Safe Sanctuary policy that will allow our church to have volunteers from other United Methodist Churches work with our Upward Program as long as we have a copy of their Safe Sanctuary Policy and it is in harmony with our agreement. New verbiage was proposed (attached) and it will be included in our Safe Sanctuary Policy. After consideration of this change, the Leadership Council voted unanimously to move forward with Upward Soccer as long as the requirements set forth previously are met.

Ben Harper presented a report on behalf of the Finance Committee. The report was effective July 31 and shows the lowest July giving since 2004. The staff and laity have done an excellent job managing expenses so that we have not overspent giving. The 2010 budget process will begin promptly.

Two Minute Ministry Updates:

Prayer Team – currently looking for Co-Leader

SPPRC Team – currently looking for Children’s Minister. Hope to have report in September.

Worship Minister – Kingdom Kids children’s choir started with 32 Children! Denise Brown has started a men’s quartet, a women’s chorus, and a women’s trio.

Worship Team – September 13 will be Youth Sunday. Acolyte training is August 30.

Women’s Ministry – Brunch Saturday, August 22 and starting Secret Sisters Ministry.

Children’s Team – VBS recap meeting planned. Need volunteers Wednesday nights for Extreme Trek – we had 55 kids and just 2 volunteers first week.

Preschool – Becky Babcock wrote a Preschool Board history for the official church records. New Preschool Team will focus on the mission of sharing Christ and assimilating more families into the life of the church.

Men’s Ministry – Raised \$2,000 at church barbecue. Funds will be used for scholarships for Rock Eagle and the Spring Retreat. Next Monday is the Monday Fellowship Dinner. October 16, 17 is a father/child outing.

Minister of Discipleship – Minister Fair went well and we will have another one in January.

Property Management Team – we’ll get some help from the Boy Scouts to move the rocks that are currently in the corner of the parking lot. Our freezer is currently broken and many repairs yet to be done around the facilities.

Preschool Director – A great start to the school year – incredible staff, incredible families. Chapel started today and a parent meeting is planned for August 25. Ask for continued prayers.

Executive Pastor – great things are happening in the life of the church – adults who want to know more about Jesus – upcoming adult and children’s baptisms that will bless us all. We are preparing to launch our new website which should be more interactive and offer more features for resources for ministry teams.

Robert Brown ended the meeting with this: “When the people of God follow God, exciting things happen. If you want to go somewhere you’ve never been, you are going to have to do some things you’ve never done.” Closed in prayer.

Hickory Flat Community Care Ministry

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work. If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!

The SPPRC and Leadership Council enthusiastically announce the launch of the Hickory Flat Community Care Ministry. This ministry will be overseen by a new Lay Team and the Pastors and will encompass ministries to provide care, encouragement, and support to persons who are hurting and in need. The ministry will target persons both within our church and within an approximate 10 mile radius. Offerings may include counseling and support ministries, relational and financial teaching ministries, life skills training, and crisis intervention.

The ministry will initially be funded by monies that have been set aside for several years as part of the original Journey of Faith Building Campaign. The funds were set aside for this specifically designated purpose and we are now seeking to staff the ministry. The individual hired will be required to seek outside funding (grants, private support) to continue to operate the ministry beyond the first year to year and a half. SPPRC and Leadership Council agree that this ministry will be funded at the present time solely by previously given, designated funds.

The church is seeking a full-time staff person to lead this ministry. Successful candidates must have a minimum of 2 years' experience in a non-profit setting with experience in the Cherokee County area highly desired. Other required abilities include experience in grant-writing, program and giving development, communications, and publications. We desire a person of strong character and spiritual maturity willing to work alongside others reaching out and serving others. The position will require someone capable of recruiting, encouraging, and Discipling a variety of volunteers.

Resumes may be submitted to hr@hickoryflatumc.org. Please include salary requirements as well as references in order to be considered. The deadline for submission of materials will be Friday, September 4, 2009.
